




## Run Auto Companies? “We Cannot Even Run the Government,” Ensign Says

Why does Congress think we can  succeed where so many businessmen have already failed? What sort of experience in the car-making business does this Congress have? Last I checked, none of my colleagues have a background in running a car company. And this car czar seems doomed to failure too. One government bureaucrat to oversee the reorganization of three massive companies? What track record can we point to that makes us think this will work?

This strikes me as a questionable intervention by the government into the private sector. We have the government thinking it can run these businesses better than they can. Heck, we cannot even run the government. We also have the government choosing which individual companies deserve help and which do not. This is not what the Government should be doing. Government should not be picking winners or losers in the private sector. For the long-term health of the country’s entrepreneurial-based economy, this could be a dangerous precedent.

It would be hard to challenge Sen. Ensign’s assessment that “we cannot even run the government.” After all, this fiscal year the annual federal deficit could be a record-shattering trillion dollars. And government-run enterprises such as the Postal Service are not exactly models of efficiency.

Ensign continued:

If we bail out the car companies, what does that mean for other struggling industries? The automakers are not the only ones suffering today in this bad economy. Would we have to bail out every large company in every major industry?... Where do we draw the line? Can we even draw a line once we have given the Big 3 a bailout?

Those are good questions not only for auto-bailout supporters but for Senator John Ensign himself. Last October, Ensign voted for the gargantuan \$700 billion bailout for financial institutions. He did not oppose a \$700 billion bailout for the financial sector, yet he opposes a much smaller \$14 billion bailout of the automobile sector for reasons that should apply to both sectors. He did not oppose the \$700 billion bailout as a “dangerous precedent”; he did not draw the line there. Now the Bush administration is considering using money from \$700 billion bailout for the financial institutions to bail out the automakers.

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